

BROTHER LEATHERNECK

Hector Chevigny

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BROTHER LEATHERNECK ^{C, 1}

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BY HECTOR CHEVIGNY

When the monastery gates closed behind him, Anthony P. Garite walked out into greater loneliness than he had known in the solitude of his cell. He joined the Marines, fought through the battles of the Pacific, and found in war the peace his troubled spirit had sought

ing to another man. He could feel stares directed at him, hear the talk and laughter die a little. He was used to that. He was well aware that he was different from other men. It was his reason for coming here.

"Next," the sergeant called, and he stepped up.

Now he had to ask that question. He stood there, frowning. He had had the question all phrased a minute ago. Now he had to think of the words again.

The sergeant tried to help him. "Want to join?"

He nodded—yes. That was part of what he wanted.

"Name?" asked the sergeant.

"Anthony P. Garite," the man answered. He was unmarried, twenty-five years old, lived in a rooming-house section of Brooklyn, and his occupation was a plumber's helper.

"No next of kin?" the sergeant asked.

The man shook his head.

"Then that's all. Any questions?"

The question, when it finally came, made the sergeant stare. Of all the weird questions he, as a recruiting officer, had been asked, this one took the cake. But he gave an answer which seemed to satisfy the man. He smiled, gestured his thanks, and turned to go without another word.

"What's the matter, Sarge?" asked a young man who had been watching. "You look floored."

"I am," the sergeant answered. "Now I've heard everything. That guy wanted to know if he joined the Reserve, would he get enough practice talking to make a few friends."

Anthony Garite's need for companionship came on him rather late in life. As a child he had been peculiarly alone. All that is known of him begins with the time that one of the priests attached to Brooklyn's Franciscan church spoke to a dark, square-faced lad of ten who had formed a habit of spending his afternoons in the empty church, staring at the altar.

"You ought to get outdoors and play, son," the priest told him.

The boy left obediently but was back the next day. After that he was always to be found around the grounds of the Franciscan church. He had a home somewhere but never spoke about it and, judging from the state of his clothes, it must have been a very poor one. He fell into the habit of helping around the church—gardening, assisting at repair work and eating his meals in the rectory. The priests gave him clothes, saw that he went to school regularly and helped him with his studies.

A Nature That Craved Solitude

When it came time for him to go to high school, though, he didn't show much interest. His way didn't seem to lie along the lines of other people's ambitions; he liked to work, by himself, with tools. The Franciscans encouraged the vocation that seemed to be rising in him, and when he was sixteen, they accepted his application for entrance to their order as a lay brother.

This didn't alter his life much—outwardly. Inwardly, though, there was a change. He began spending more hours in the chapel than were required. He grew more and more silent; he became more withdrawn. After two years, the Father Superior called Anthony into his office one day and asked him if he would not prefer to belong to the Order of Reformed Cistercians—the monks who call themselves Trappists. It was an idea that had occurred to Anthony, too. They wrote to the abbot of the monastery of Our Lady of the Valley, at Cumberland, Rhode Island, who granted an interview. This was in 1930.

There are things on this earth which baffle

(Continued on page 75)

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When the time approached for him to take his final vows, he asked the abbot for release. . . . Two years slipped by. It was 1940. His country feared war . . . and he was being called to active duty

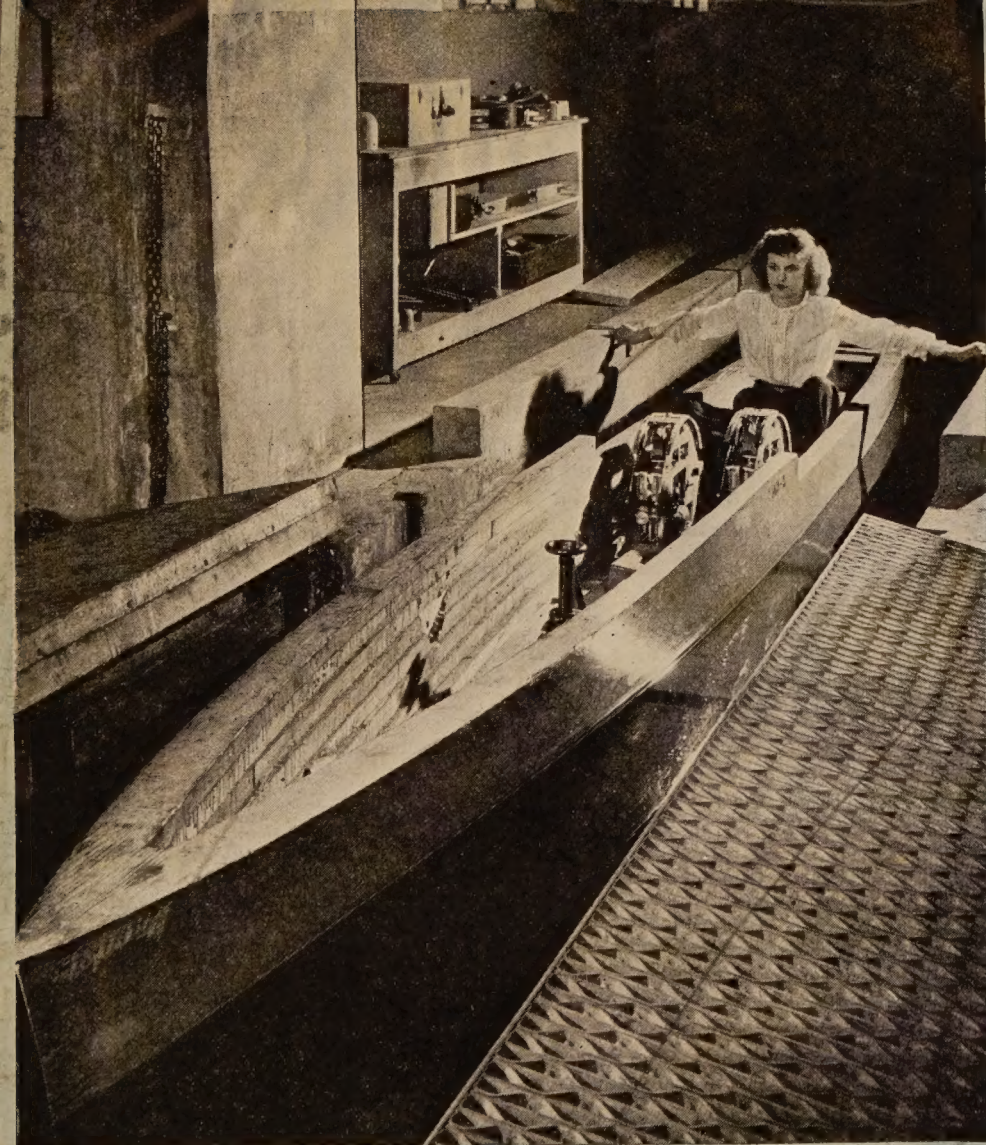
He helped the priest don his vestments. . . . The crowded wardroom watched Monk with wonderment. . . . His gestures were deliberate. He seemed to be at home, to belong to the performance of this rite

WALKING Brooklyn's crowded streets alone with his loneliness—that was the way he spent his evenings that fall of 1938—he had often noticed that the crowd of young men hanging around that Marine recruiting office seemed to have a very good time laughing and talking together. One evening he went in. There was something he had to know.

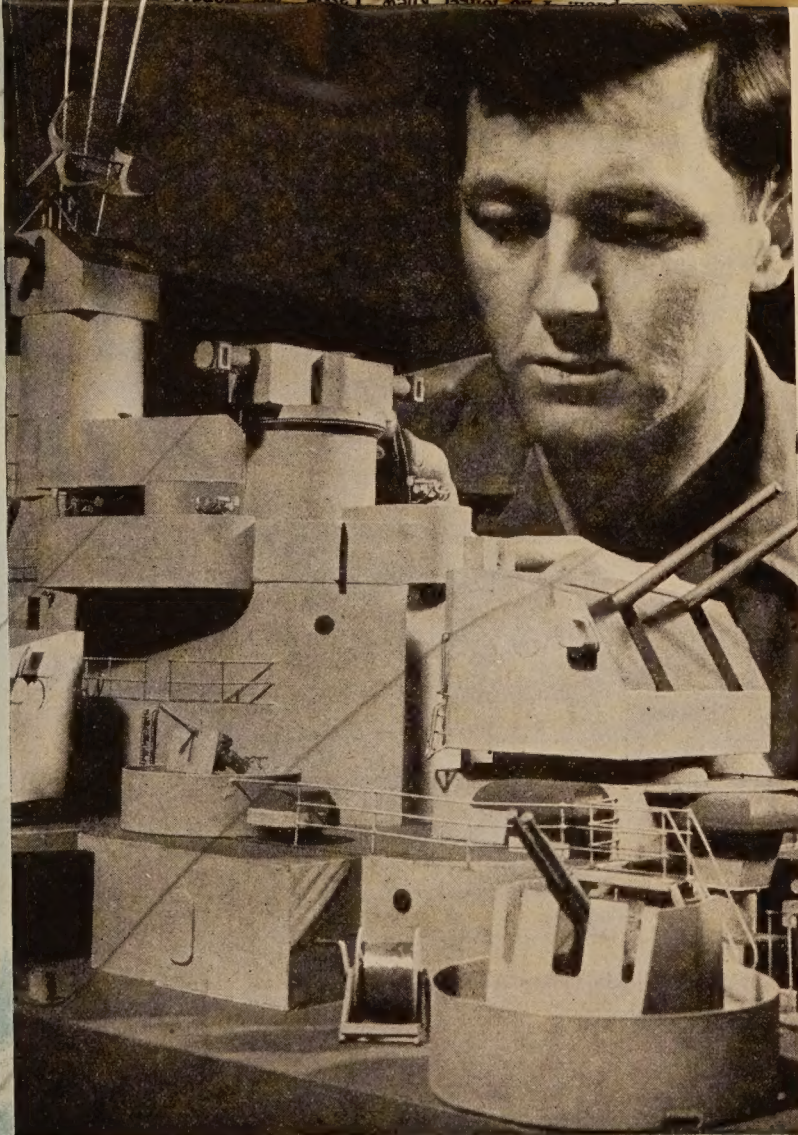
It was hard to tell his age—twenty-five, maybe thirty. He was one of those people in whom you sensed at once some important, subtle difference. Not that there was much about his appearance to suggest it. At first glance you'd take him for some laborer of Italian, French, or maybe Basque extraction. He had a square, dark face and a mop of curly black hair that needed cutting badly. His clothes didn't fit well and his hands were hardened and stained. In build he was on the chunky side; he gave the impression of great physical strength but so do many men without seeming set apart from others. That was it; he seemed set apart.

The place was crowded. He had to wait a few minutes for the sergeant to finish talk-

ILLUSTRATED BY LEON GREGORI



This model is still on the naval secret list. It is a big carrier built exactly to scale and is equipped with two dynamometers. These electrical motors will speed the craft up and down the 1,300-foot indoor towing basin and will make it execute high-speed turns. Dye plugs, fitted under the bow, will follow the flow of water and leave tracing stains on the hull. The girl operates the giant towing carriage which hauls the battlewagon models



Workmen at the towing basin hand-tool every part of the models. This ship is the U.S.S. Fargo, a cruiser so heavily gunned that it can take anything its weight afloat in a sea fight. Parts of this ship cannot yet be shown. In a shop across the street from this one, Navy scientists shoot tiny torpedoes into a glass tank. Result: improved "fish"

Tomorrow's Navy

BY JIM BISHOP

ing. So scientists and M.I.T. engineers and Stevens engineers and Annapolis engineers are all over the place, finding out answers to things hitherto thought impossible of solution. All day long, a giant carriage on rails hauls models of combat vessels up and down a 1,300-foot basin at speeds controlled within 0.01 of a knot. All day long, these models are studied for height and formation of bow waves, stability, maneuverability. When they leave the water, dye stains on the hull show whether the water flowed evenly or whether the hull design has created eddies.

All this is done in the deep-water basin, which is now being lengthened to about 3,000 feet and is built to the curvature of the earth. There is a high-speed basin where, for instance, PT models are tested. There is a shallow-water basin where sea-going tugs and LCIs and other landing craft are tested. There is a turning circle where a model battleship executes tight turns at high speed. From this, Admiral Howard's men can tell the Navy Department how well this particular battleship will be able to swing away from bombs after they leave enemy planes.

Not long ago, a certain Navy Yard phoned

that they were launching a very big carrier and they were worried about how far the carrier would go toward the opposite bank before stopping. The basin engineers took the carrier in question off the model storage shelves, built a launching platform, sent it down into the shallow-water basin, watched it come to a stop and made computations. They phoned the Navy Yard and predicted where the carrier would halt. After the launching, the Yard phoned back and said that the Model Basin engineers were wrong by ten feet.

In a reduced-pressure tank, engineers set bronze models of cruiser propellers. The models are under ten inches in size. The real ones are as big as your living room. The models run at 1,800 revolutions per minute for hours on end in the battle against vacuum bubbles on the backs of the blades. This is called cavitation, and everything it touches under water loses efficiency. It affects torpedoes and depth bombs and rudders, too. At the Taylor Model Basin, they have discovered enough antidotes to cavitation to reduce it to a minimum.

At the outdoor basin, Lieutenant Com-

mander Robert Browning conducted underwater explosion tests. This pond was built with a bumpy bottom so that shock echoes would not bounce back upward after hitting bottom. Then the Navy borrowed that Humpty Dumpty of a diving bell, the Beebe bathysphere, which is thick enough to withstand great depths and light explosions. They lower it 25 feet to the bottom of the pond and set off explosions. Cameras geared to one thirty-thousandth of a second photograph the blast, the shock circles and echoes. Soon we will know two things: how to set off the most damaging types of explosions against an enemy; how to build hulls to withstand the worst blasts.

The trend in our Navy is toward bigger combat ships in each class. The destroyer of 1918 averaged a little better than a thousand tons. Today's destroyer (the U.S.S. English is an example, is listed as 2,200 tons) probably weighs better than 3,000, and could battle a World War I cruiser and win. In 1904, the proud battleship Texas was slightly better than 6,000 tons. Today an Iowa-class battlewagon, full load, rates better than 52,000 tons.

The same is true of carriers. The Franklin D. Roosevelt, not yet in commission, will weigh more than 45,000 tons against the 27,000 tons of the Essex class. We have light cruisers weighing 10,000 tons—they used to weigh 6,000—and heavy cruisers of the Baltimore class of 13,000 tons, instead of the one-time 9,000.

The result of this fattening has been the creation of—for us—two new classes of ships: the battle cruiser and the destroyer escort. The battle cruiser Guam is 27,000 tons, as heavy as our old battleship New York. The new destroyer escort Reuben James is 1,300 tons, heavier by 110 tons than the gallant destroyer for which it was named.

So far in this war, we have built 161 types of combat-ship models. Every one has been tested. Some, either built, building, or parts of tomorrow's Navy, are shown on these pages. The big exhibition models cost as much as \$3,000 or more apiece. The function of all models at the basin is to show all the strengths and weaknesses before building the actual warship.

It's a very low-premium insurance policy for us to carry.

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR COLLIER'S BY IKE VERN-PIX

what to say to Hawkins. A bellboy stood in the open door bearing a telegram on a small platter. He was scrubbed and shining and his name was Fate.

For the telegram, I knew, could only be coming from California: from Hawkins' agent or his studio. In either case, it would settle things.

Hawkins slit open the wire and read it. Then slowly he handed it to me. It was from Lisl's agent. There was an odd, foolish look on Hawkins' face. He walked to the window and pushed the curtain aside, looking out at the snow. I read the telegram:

You are the father of a son. Lisl wants to know if you have your red turtle-neck sweater in New York.

For a long while, we were both silent. "Ill!" Hawkins finally said. "Ill! Of course, she was ill. No wonder she almost murdered

Lassie. No wonder she wouldn't see me. What does it say? A boy?" "A boy," I said. "Lisl is asking for me?" He asked the question eagerly. "That's natural enough." He picked up the telegram; he walked toward the door. "Where are you going?" I said, keeping a straight face. "Going?" he said. "Back." I began to laugh again but Hawkins didn't seem to notice. "Do you want a cigar?" he said. "I don't smoke cigars." He paused at the door. "A boy!" He flourished the telegram. "California!" he murmured; and there was a touch of awe and wonder in his voice. "The climate of California!"

THE END



Brother Leatherneck

Continued from page 24

and frustrate the understanding of the earth-bound mind. The life of a Trappist, and its purpose, is such a thing. Three hundred years ago, a man named De Rancé became abbot of the Cistercian monastery at La Trappe, in Normandy. He found laxity among the

A monk could have no furniture in his cell but a wooden *prie-dieu* before the crucifix and a bed of two wooden planks covered by a thin straw mattress. His days would begin at two in the morning with the chanting of the day's first office. At four, he would hear Mass. Darkness would still lie over the land as he ate his first meal of tea and dry bread before going out to the monastery's fields and barns to begin the day's work. There would be one more meal each day—soup and dry bread; meat would never be eaten.

But the distinctive feature of the life was the practice of perpetual silence. During the day, when a gesture would not be enough to make some meaning clear, the monk could say such brief words as were necessary. At night, though, when he had closed the door of his cell, no monk of La Trappe could utter a sound. In three centuries this rule has not been modified in any essential and Trappist monasteries, founded everywhere in the world, number adherents by the hundreds.

It was this way at the monastery of Our Lady of the Valley, at Cumberland, Rhode Island. The abbot talked to Anthony Garite a long time, telling him of the life and its real purpose and warning him that it is not for those who merely seek escape. Anthony understood, assumed the white habit of the Trappist novice, and took the name of Brother Mary Pius.

He found the life not without beauty. Trappists make their monasteries lovely with patient labor. They come to comprehend the

earth and its uses. Their fields return heavy harvests. Their herds are fat and sleek, their birds tame, their dogs friendly. Illness is rare, and extreme old age common among Trappists.

For seven years Brother Mary Pius gave no sign that he was unhappy with the life he had chosen. The abbot was surprised but not unprepared; he knew well the fears that men sometimes have on the threshold of the irrevocable. And often the more humble the man the greater his fears. The abbot told Brother Mary Pius that he was free to go and that if he chose to return, his place in the refectory, and the cell where he had slept would be his again.

When he closed the monastery gates behind him, the man to be known once more as Anthony Garite had in his pocket five dollars given him by the abbot, and he was dressed in clothing given the monks through charity.

He had shaved his beard, but his hair had been inexpertly cut, and his gait was that of a man accustomed to walking in plowed fields. This was the figure that trudged from Cumberland to Providence in search of a bus to take him to Brooklyn. Not until he stepped up to the ticket window in Providence did he fully realize the change wrought in him by the past seven years.

A man needs more than gestures to indicate his wish for even so simple a thing as a ticket to Brooklyn. Words have to be used, transfer points understood, people apologized to when jostled, change counted, and the value of such coins as quarters and nickels remembered. That bus ride told him something too: that his very appearance gave cause for staring and avoidance and that even if he tried to talk, no one would answer.

That night he walked the streets of Brook-



"Putting up" a good fight

Good work well done...summer's wealth is stored for winter health! And now it's time for a glass of cool tingling Canada Dry Ginger Ale. There's zest and refreshment in every bubble, pleasure in every sip. So take a minute in the midst of "putting up" a good fight to relish this sparkling treat...it's invigorating!

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lyn, staring at the profusion of lights, vehicles and people, and knew, probably for the first time, the feeling of loneliness. It was an emotion that he did not like and it struck him as strange, indeed, that he should feel it here, in this babble of talk, among these crowds. It was a strong temptation to return to the peace he had abandoned. But he had come out into the world to test it and himself. He was going through with it.

Anthony was learning that the privilege of living in the world is not had without paying a price. You cannot be subtly different; you must conform. You must work, and at the orders of others; you must have a job. You cannot remain alone; you must have friends, or perish.

A job was the immediate need—that five dollars didn't go far. He proved to be a plumber that he was good with tools and was put to work. He found a cheap room. With his first pay he got some clothes. The problem of making friends, though, was going to be infinitely harder to solve.

Each night he walked Brooklyn's crowded sidewalks, fighting his loneliness. He wondered why it hurt to be so alone. It seemed so easy not to be. You'd think you could just step up to some man sauntering past and say, "I'd like you to be my friend." But it couldn't be done that way. It took time, and it had to be a series of happy accidents, of fortunate meetings. And even then you had to have more ease than he had at talking. He had often passed that Marine recruiting poster that stood on the sidewalk. The office across from it was always filled with young men laughing and talking. "The Marine Reserve Wants You," the poster said. At last one evening he went in.

The Antidote for Loneliness

After that, he lived for Tuesday nights when Reserve members gathered at Brooklyn's huge, barnlike armory. What pleased Anthony was that he was considered no different from anyone else. Other beginners were as clumsy as he—and as diffident. Compliments and reprimands were distributed evenly, and everyone advanced on a completely equal basis. And after drill was over, when the fellows gathered in little knots, he could do as much or as little talking as he pleased. Anthony knew how to take orders, he was clever with his hands. He got along fine. He wasn't lonely any more.

Two years slipped by. Suddenly it was 1940, and Anthony received one of the few letters he ever got in his life. It told him that belonging to the Marine Corps Reserve meant something more than just making friends. His country feared war with its enemies, and he was being called to active duty.

Private Garite first went to Iceland. Eight months later he went to Cuba for the organization of the First Marine Division. Exactly twenty-two months after he had been called into active service, he was at Guadalcanal and he had been promoted to the rank of corporal.

He had also acquired a nickname. The boys must have found out about his past, for they had taken to calling him "Monk." He accepted the term with complete amiability. He knew neither derision nor disrespect was implied: He was called Monk for the same reason that another was called "Shorty" or "Texas." He knew, too, that in the Marines a nickname is the badge of acceptance. Monk had been accepted.

He had long since learned to express himself with ease when he had to, but taciturnity was still his chief characteristic and he preferred gestures to words. He liked to hear others talk. Good listeners are rare, and Monk was one of the best. Furthermore, men admire ability, and Monk was an excellent soldier. He was always cheerful, he never groused, he seemed to have no nerves. This last quality became especially apparent during the hell of Guadalcanal where more than one otherwise able man cracked under the strain.

After four months of Guadalcanal, Monk's outfit was retired to Australia for several months of rest and rehabilitation. During this period the men, of course, missed no chance to get into town. Monk went with them, but instead of drifting with the rest in

search of beer, movies or dates, he would seek out a church.

One day he entered a chapel connected with a convent maintaining an orphanage for small boys. The sisters were evidently having a hard time of it these war days, and when Monk managed to converse with them he found this to be the case. He astounded the nuns by giving them one thousand dollars out of his savings and set to work as carpenter and plumber. He also repainted the chapel, installing several new decorations, among them a handsome crucifix. In return, he asked only the privilege of using the chapel for his long hours of prayer and meditation.

The sisters were distressed when their young American benefactor eventually told them he would soon return to jungle warfare on the islands to the north. Because of military security, he did not actually say goodbye although his outfit was departing in a few days. It, therefore, hurt him deeply to hear that the sisters had arranged a farewell tea party to which he had been invited as honored guest. It was impossible for him either to attend or explain. Before departing, however, he requested that twenty dollars a month of his pay be allotted to his friends at the convent—the only allotment on

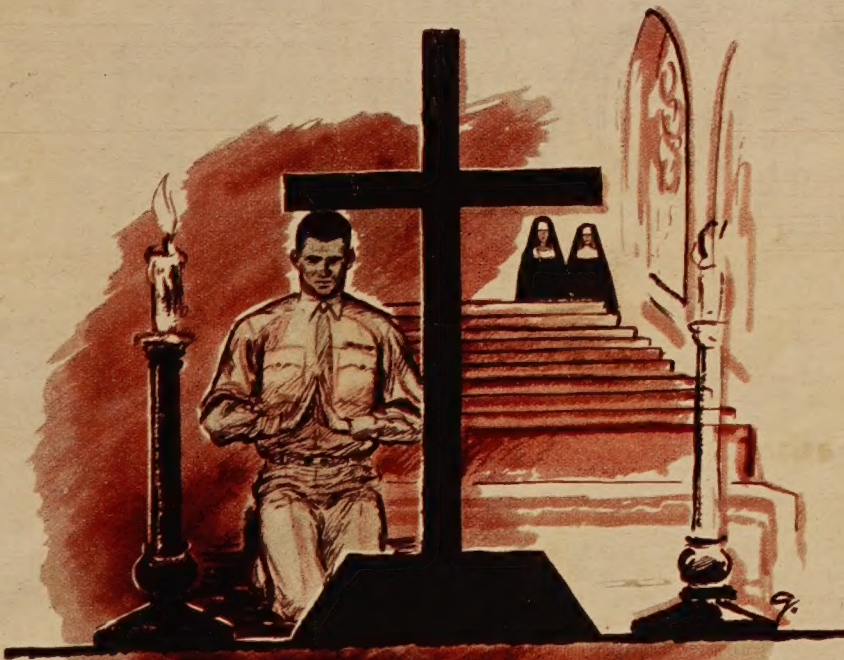
As the official staff looked on, Monk worked on the contraption and in five minutes he had it working as efficiently as ever.

"What's your name, son?" asked the officer. "Corporal Anthony P. Garite, sir."

"All right, Garite—from now on you're a sergeant."

From the Solomon Islands, Monk's outfit boarded a transport that would take it to the assault of the island of Peleliu. Monk was now a seasoned Leatherneck. He had been two years in the South Pacific, four in active service. His immediate charge was a machine-gun squad—men who must go in the forefront to establish a beachhead. A Catholic chaplain came aboard to conduct services which, for many a Marine, might be his last. An altar was improvised upon a sick-bay operating table in the officers' wardroom. A microphone was hooked up with the ship's public address system. The chaplain asked for a volunteer to serve his Mass and Sergeant Garite stepped forward.

He helped the priest don his vestments. Then, hands clasped before him, he entered the wardroom ahead of the priest and together they knelt before the improvised altar. The crowded wardroom watched Monk with wonderment. His face was unsmiling. His



He asked only the privilege of using the chapel for hours of prayer

record after the name of Anthony P. Garite, USMC.

Once again his outfit was headed for combat. This time it was the New Britain campaign. It was following the battle at Cape Gloucester that Monk gained his sergeant's stripes. How he got them is a story unique in the annals of the Marine Corps.

For some reason best known to the services of supply, a flush toilet was included in the equipment sent to the area where Monk's outfit was resting. It was the real thing, made of glistening white porcelain complete with white enamel seat. A high-ranking officer had sequestered the item, and had had it installed in his quarters. It became a mark of special favor to his friends to be allowed to use it.

One night the officer was giving a party when, according to official reports, the toilet "became inexplicably plugged up." The rank of the toilet's possessor is indicated by the fact that at two in the morning he hastily called a colonel of Engineers upon the problem of restoring this reminder of civilization to its former usefulness.

"Monk," replied the colonel, "is the only plumber in the division."

"I don't give a hang what his name is," replied the officer. "Get him in here to fix this . . . toilet!"

gestures, his movements, though assured, were no less deliberate than usual, yet he seemed suddenly, peculiarly, to be at home, to belong to the performance of this rite. Because Monk had never presumed to push on anyone the faith that he himself so passionately held, most had forgotten the fact that originally caused him to be given his nickname.

As the words of the Mass were carried to every part of the transport, table-tennis paddles were laid aside, cards put away, cigarettes ground out. No matter your degree of faith, or lack of it, when the prospect of battle is not far ahead of you, there always comes a moment you can't duck; you wonder what things are all about, what it's all been worth to you, what death really might mean. It's not a very comfortable moment; facing the real probability of death never is. Suddenly you envy a man whose faith and life have been such that death need hold no fear for him.

The assault on Peleliu was made September 15, 1944. The pattern of attack against a Jap-held island had been well developed; men like Monk Garite had helped develop it through long months of cruel warfare beginning on Guadalcanal. The umbrella of fire from the naval guns offshore, the bombers droning overhead, the exact timing that

guided the waves of landing craft across the beaches.

The moment for Monk's squad to be on that beach was ten A.M.—ninety minutes after the first wave. They rested now on the transport's deck, their equipment on their backs, and scanned the onshore hell through grim, experienced eyes, waiting for the signal that would send them swarming down cargo nets and into their respective amphibious tractors. This, they knew without being told, was going to be as tough as anything they had yet seen.

It was. That part of the beach up which Monk's men had to advance with their machine guns to establish a defensive perimeter became known as Bloody Nose Ridge. The Japs, fortified behind an eminence, could throw everything at them from knee-mortar shells to machine-gun bullets. It seemed improbable that anyone could advance in the face of that metal rain and live. But the Marines jumping from those amphibious tractors and advancing into it knew that although some had to get hurt and even die, some always lived, too.

That was the way it always had turned out and that's all a man could gamble on now. Perhaps the bravery of soldiers in battle is as simple as that; at any rate, neither Monk nor any of his men hesitated for a second but, crouching low to minimize the probability of death, they ran forward up the coral beach.

Monk was the first to get it. A bullet from a modern rifle hits a man with the force of hundreds of pounds. Monk got that sniper's bullet in his left shoulder, spun like a top, fell prone. No one stopped for him, no one could; orders were to get up there and dig in those machine guns. Monk lay there, stunned, for perhaps a half minute. Then, those who saw him say, he got painfully to his knees and, blood pulsing from his shoulder, tried to crawl after his men. He could use only one arm—the other dangled uselessly from its shoulder. He made only five yards. A Jap mortar shell put a quick end to his progress. It fell beside him, burst, filled his chest and abdomen with shrapnel.

Prelude to Eternal Silence

Monk was still alive, though, when the medical corpsmen reached him—he was ever conscious—but he could move no part of his body and he was in such pain the sweat broke out in great globules on his dark face and thick neck when they lifted him onto the stretcher. But he made no comment.

He had nothing to say, either, when taken to surgery aboard the hospital ship. It is rare for a man not to babble when coming out of ether; Monk, though, spoke not a word. He had returned to the Great Silence of the Trappists.

Perhaps he knew he was going to die. The doctors, for a time, had hopes for him. That strong body, never sick, seemingly showed signs of recovering despite its dreadful internal wounds. Monk smiled when they told him he'd be all right, and with a gesture indicated his thanks for what they were trying to do for him. That was all.

On the tenth day Monk was dead. By this time, the situation on Peleliu was under control, and the men of Monk's squad could come aboard the transport to attend his burial service.

Monk was committed to the deep with the full honors of the Navy. The ship's crew stood at attention as his body, wrapped in sailcloth, weighted with shells, and covered with the American flag, was carried to the taffrail.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life. . . ." the skipper read from the ship's prayerbook. Bugles blew taps, three rifle volleys were fired in the air. At the signal from the skipper, the sailors stepped forward, tipped the board, and all that was mortal of Anthony Garite slid into the Pacific.

Monk would have liked these honors; they were meant for a man who had done his job well, and his duty faithfully. But there was one thing about it, something not prescribed by Navy regulations even for the greatest hero, which Monk would have liked best of all. There were tears in the eyes of his brother Leathernecks.

THE END

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